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UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 03 ANKARA 001628

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JCS PASS J-5/CDR S. WRIGHT

E.O. 12958: N/A  
TAGS: [OPRC](#) [KMDR](#) [TU](#) [PREL](#) [KPAO](#)  
SUBJECT: TURKISH MEDIA REACTION  
FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 13, 2009

Media Highlights: A/S Gordon in Ankara; Turkey's Efforts on Iran  
Nukes; Amb. Jeffrey on Haberturk;  
France as ME Mediator; Phone Tapping Frenzy

Assistant Secretary Phil Gordon in Ankara  
Intellectual/Islamist-oriented Zaman's reports that A/S Phil Gordon had meetings with FM Davutoglu and Undersecretary Sinirlioglu in Ankara yesterday. Foreign Ministry officials said that the purpose of the meetings were preparations for PM Erdogan's visit to US on December 7. Zaman reports that Davutoglu briefed Gordon on his meetings with Iranian President Ahmedinejad regarding Iran's nuclear energy. Zaman noted that Gordon expressed reservations about Turkey's signing an energy agreement with Iran by saying "the US thinks that it is not time to have business with Iran." Liberal Radikal headline reads "There is no Slipping on Turkey's Axis" and says that following his visits to Berlin and Geneva, A/S Gordon in Ankara said that the US welcomes Turkey being in a good cooperation with the Western World as well as with its neighbors and the Eastern world. Gordon was quoted as saying "Turkey's ties with Iran and Arab countries are as important as its ties with Europe and Israel. I don't see any changes in Turkey's axis. We have full trust that Turkey remains as a key partner to the US." Gordon emphasized that it is only natural not to be in full agreement with Turkey regarding Iran and that Turkey's relationship with Iran neither disturbed nor shocked the US. Gordon also mentioned that the US would welcome it if Iran decides to send the enriched uranium to Turkey. When he was asked about Israel's nuclear weapons, Gordon said "Israel has exhibited a stable nuclear situation for a long time. We are trying to establish an atmosphere in the Middle East where no country would feel the need for nuclear weapons." Mainstream Milliyet's senior columnist Semih Idiz wrote that A/S Gordon criticized PM Erdogan's support to Iran and Sudan without giving any names. Even though it was done in diplomatic style, Gordon mentioned that the US was disturbed by the strong support Turkey gave to Iran and Sudan, according to Idiz. However, Gordon said he did not agree with the speculations that there was a slip of axis in Turkey's foreign policies. Regarding Turkey-Israel relations, Gordon said "We hope that Turkey includes Israel also when it says 'zero problems with neighbors'." When he was asked about AKP's democratic opening and military coup allegations, Gordon said "since these are Turkey's domestic issues, I will not make any comments on

them."

Iran's Nuclear Program: FM Davutoglu Discusses With Baradei  
Mainstream Sabah's diplomatic correspondent Duygu Guvenc's headline is "Nuclear Attack by Ankara" and says "after being successful in convincing Iran about an international mechanism to inspect its nuclear program, Ankara is trying to convince the members of the Security Council." Guvenc reports that with this as a framework, FM Davutoglu held a phone conversation with Atomic Energy Agency Director-General Baradei yesterday and then met with A/S Gordon. During his meeting with Gordon, FM Davutoglu gave him the message that "Turkey opposes the sanctions against Iran and believes that the dialog process should continue," according to Gunvenc. Zaman also covers the same story and says that Davutoglu shared with Baradei the results of contacts held by Turkish officials with Iranian President Ahmedinejad, FM Mottaki and other Iranian officials during a recent meeting in Istanbul. Nationalist Haber Turk reports that Tehran was positive about the proposal for storing uranium in Turkey.

Amb Jeffrey Answers Range of Questions on TV Interview: Karabakh

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Response Picked Up in Azerbaijan

In an interview on popular TV channel HaberTurk, the Ambassador responded to a range of questions regarding Iraq and the PKK, domestic Turkish debates, Turkey's recent position on Sudan and Iran, Turkey Armenian normalizations and PM Erdogan's upcoming trip to the U.S. Amb Jeffrey focused on the strength of bilateral relations with Turkey noting that "we have a great deal of cooperation, a great deal of exchange with this country and this government." His response concerning Karabakh was reported by the Azeri State news agency, AzerTaj which quoted him as saying "Azerbaijan is a strategically important country. . . we want the meetings to continue"

Turkey - France: ME Mediation and EU - Nbucco

Mainstreams Milliyet and Hurriyet report that French President Sarkozy told the Syrian Al-Vatan newspaper that France is ready to take on a role in indirect peace talks between Israel and Syria. Sarkozy added that "the peace negotiations can resume under the coordination of the EU and Turkey. Hurriyet notes that Sarkozy met with Netanyahu the other night and is going to pass on a message to Syria's Assad today that Israel is ready to talk with Syria whenever they are ready. Speaking to Le Figaro Assad mentioned Turkey's name as the mediator but reiterated his wish for the US to take action.

Mainstream Aksam carries an interview with Energy Minister Yildiz and quotes him as saying "Turkey will do its best not to include France in the Nabucco project unless chapters on energy are opened for Turkey-EU negotiation process."

Phone Tapping Tremors (Hurriyet)

Mainstream and Islamist/conservative papers differ significantly in their front page reports on the latest Ergenekon scandal regarding wire tapping of some 56 judges and prosecutors connected to the case. Islamist oriented Yeni Safak says the phone tapping was justified because "those judiciary members were having conversations with the Ergenekon members" and one of its columnists, Tamer Korkmaz defines Ergenekon "as an entity designed by the US and NATO." Another Islamist outlet, Zaman, draws parallelism between the "clean hands" operation in Italy and the Ergenekon case by saying "this is a part of the operation within the judiciary and it is normal to see reaction and fury." Mainstream Hurriyet calls it "Phone Tapping Tremor" and liberal Radikal depicts as "Open War Within the State" emphasizing that the Ergenekon riff within the bureaucracy has hit a peak. Milliyet's Mehmet Tezkan has concerns about Prime Minister Erdogan's approach and the way Turkey is headed: "This is all about how one-man ruling fashion ends up and as far as Turkey is concerned we are moving toward a non-democracy." Meanwhile, Hurriyet's Mehmet Yilmaz calls Turkey "a police state" because "even the rule of law does not work for judicial members."

Upcoming events:

November 13: Parliament debate on the Kurdish initiative starts this

afternoon

November 16-18: PM Erdogan will attend the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) summit held in Rome

November 23: Israeli Industry, Trade and Labor Minister Binyamin Ben Eliezer will visit Turkey

TV News (CNN Turk)

Domestic

- 8 PKK members surrendered themselves to security forces in Habur yesterday

- 6 Children in Adana are given five to eight years in prison for throwing stones at the security forces

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- DTP deputy Selahattin Demirtas said PKK militants will not return to Turkey before the Turkish government changes its stance.

World

- European Parliament gives support to plan for abolishing visa requirements for nationals of Serbia, Macedonia and Montenegro

JEFFREY